

SMITH'S WIRE AGAIN DELAYS B. R. T. STRIKE

Governor Asks Men to Talk
It Over With Him and
They Will Do So.

RELY ON COURT PROMISE

Garrison to Take Up Cases of
Discharged Employees at
Conference To-day.

B. R. T. union members in a mass meeting at Arcadia Hall last night voted unanimously to postpone the threatened walkout at least until pending conferences have been held. They had a message from Gov. Smith before them requesting that the strike be delayed until an opportunity could be had for him to "talk it over" with the strike leaders.

The meeting was not so largely attended as former gatherings of the B. R. T.'s, and what there was made up in vociferousness. For a few minutes after the executive committee had made its report favoring another delay in calling the strike there was uproar.

A score of members sprang to their feet demanding the floor. Above the din William Collins, organizer for the American Federation of Labor could be heard demanding that the question on the strike vote be put.

Arthur Becker, a former conductor on the Bergen street line who was discharged several days ago, worked his way toward the front and was the object of hooting and catcalls. P. J. O'Brien intervened and after some more confusion the floor was given to him.

"Judge Mayer said they would not discharge us," he cried. "But they will discharge us. Maybe they will not discharge the members of the executive committee, but they will us."

The rest of his utterances were lost. The meeting was evidently against him. The speeches of Mr. O'Brien, James H. Vahey, counsel for the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees; Mr. Collins and others had been temperate in character and contained a repetition of the slogan that "the men had nothing to fear" because they belonged to the union. The strength for this statement was drawn from the conference held Wednesday with Judge Mayer of the Federal Court.

Message From the Governor.

Gov. Smith, it was announced, will meet to-day with the union committee represented by W. J. Mahoney and Frank Morrison, secretary of the Federation of Labor. His message, which was read before the executive committee yesterday, was brief:

"I earnestly hope you can delay action in the Brooklyn strike matter until we have had an opportunity to talk it over. Communicate with me."

Inspector Formosa of the Fifteenth District was on hand when the crowd began gathering with a force of twenty uniformed policemen. A report had reached headquarters that the rank and file had split away from the guidance of the union leaders and were prepared to start a rumpus, but such did not prove to be the case. Although the shouting during the debate ran high at times, it did not reach the fistic point, and none of the coppers was called on for special duty in conducting unionists to the exits.

Judge Mayer's pledge that no member of the union would be restricted against and that the cases of the men discharged would be taken up individually acted as a palliative to the sore feelings of the unionists. The delays of the last week had frayed the edges from their good nature, but the executive committee put forward its point so convincingly that after Becker had made his attempt at revolt the pot simmered down.

Mr. Vahey said that Judge Mayer had promised there would be no restrictions of the rights of any one joining the union, and that this statement made first on Wednesday, had been confirmed at a conference with the Judge yesterday afternoon.

Members to Be Protected.

"Every member of the Amalgamated Association is safe in his job," he said. "He has the right in a proper way to ask others to join the union. Judge Mayer has approached the whole matter in a fair, just and sympathetic way. He has no wish to interfere with any man's job."

"If any officers of the road attempt to interfere with any of you men or women all you have to do is to call the attention of your officers to it and they will go to Judge Mayer."

inquired whether it should be taken by acclamation. He was met with a chorus of yells. He then asked:

"Shall the report of the committee be adopted?"

The entire meeting stood and the strike was again postponed.

Mr. Garrison announced yesterday that the union had been granted an increase in wages to correspond with the amount paid similar classes of employees by the employer. He did not go into details of the agreement, contenting himself with the assertion that it was "satisfactory" to the men and that it had been entered into following a conference with a committee representing the townsmen.

Before the meeting in Arcadia Hall began B. R. T. officials announced they were following a policy of "watchful waiting" and that they were fully prepared to meet any emergency. Any men who went on strike, they reiterated, would be discharged from the system's employ and their places filled from the list of discharged soldiers and others who are waiting to take jobs whenever vacancies occur.

Mr. Garrison further defined his attitude in the following letter which he sent yesterday to Judge Julius M. Mayer of the Federal District Court:

"I received the typewritten copy of the statement made by you to the visiting committee yesterday. In respect to the information you have brought me, I reply as follows:

"You were, of course, right in stating that I meant exactly what I said in my circular letter of March 11 and no man who is discharged who does not deserve discharge by a breach of discipline, and of course no man will be discharged because he chooses to join a labor or other organization."

Garrison to Act on Discharges.

"I have recently made an order, applicable in all departments, that no man who happens to belong to a union shall be discharged for any cause unless I am consulted and approve of such action."

"In respect to the complaints of individuals as to improper treatment of their personal grievance I propose to supplement the existing right of appeal with one immediately to myself. I will provide that whenever the existing grievance has been fully appealed to and the man desires so to do, he may have his case brought before me for final action is taken thereon. I will, of course, give him a full, fair and impartial hearing and decision."

"It seems to me that this meets the situation in a rational way and assures all concerned of justice and fairness."

A verbatim copy of the proceedings in Judge Mayer's chambers Wednesday was gone over minutely at a conference of the union leaders at the Hotel Continental, Manhattan, yesterday afternoon.

Those present were James H. Vahey, general counsel for the Amalgamated; Louis Fridiger, local counsel for Division 867 of the union; Charles E. Bichner, associate counsel; Thomas P. Shive, the Amalgamated's president, and P. J. O'Brien, second vice-president.

At the conclusion of the conference Mr. O'Brien said the statement would be given out until after the Arcadia Hall meeting. A member of the executive committee said it had been decided that the men would not appeal to the War Labor Board or to President Wilson, but settle their differences with Mr. Garrison.

"Most of the men want a strike," he said. "They feel they have done everything within reason to make a peaceful settlement. We have given Mr. Garrison too much time. We should have issued a strike order last night to take effect twenty-four hours after its issuance."

NATIONAL TIEUP BEING VOTED.

July 1 Set for Walkout in All Telephone Companies.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., April 17.—J. P. Noonan, acting president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, whose headquarters are located here, announced to-night that localities of that union are voting overwhelming majorities in favor of a nationwide strike July 1. The official canvass of the voting will not have been completed before May 11, but Mr. Noonan said that from present indications the option for the strike appears almost unanimous.

The International Brotherhood has 150,000 members. They include linemen, telegraphers, splicers, installers and telephone and telegraph operators. Despatches from Fort Wayne, Ind., to-night said that the telephone operators there have voted in favor of the strike and in Cleveland the 1,800 workers employed by the two telephone companies have cast similar votes.

Strike Voted at Bridgeport.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn., April 17.—At a meeting of union telephone operators of the Bridgeport exchange to-night a strike vote was taken and seventy-eight of the eighty-five girls present voted to walk out unless their demands are granted.

BURLESON HELPS PHONE STRIKERS

Postmaster - General Places
Wage Demands Before Com-
pany's General Manager.

TUMULTU APPEALS AGAIN

Several Thousand Electrical
Workers Join Women in
Walkout.

Boston, April 17.—The decision of Postmaster General Burleson to place before William R. Driver, General Manager of the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, the wage demands of the striking telephone operators who have tied up wire communication throughout New England, was made known to the strikers in a letter from Mr. Driver to-night. The letter asked the strikers' representatives to meet Mr. Driver "at an early hour" for a preliminary discussion, which he said "should terminate the present deplorable situation."

Mr. Driver sent this letter to Miss Mary E. June, Miss May Mahoney and Miss Birdie Powers, of the Boston Operators' Committee, and Miss Helen Moran of Lowell, Mass., representing the organized operators outside the Boston district. The letter follows:

"I have just received from the Assistant Postmaster General a telegram containing a statement given out this afternoon in Washington by the Postmaster General, a copy of which is inclosed. As shown by that statement, I am to notify all employees of the Postmaster General's service in New England should be tied up as it is and unthinkable that the great business interests of that section should be strangled by continuance of this condition," said Mr. Burleson. "The telephone operators, for reasons which are inexplicable to me, have refused to take steps to put the machinery in motion through which this situation may be relieved. The general manager of the New England companies, Mr. Driver, cannot act without something in the way of an application for the adjustment of the wage scale before him. Thus matters are brought to a deadlock."

"It is preposterous that the telephone service in New England should be tied up as it is and unthinkable that the great business interests of that section should be strangled by continuance of this condition," said Mr. Burleson. "The telephone operators, for reasons which are inexplicable to me, have refused to take steps to put the machinery in motion through which this situation may be relieved. The general manager of the New England companies, Mr. Driver, cannot act without something in the way of an application for the adjustment of the wage scale before him. Thus matters are brought to a deadlock."

A second appeal to the New England strikers to return to work was telegraphed to-day by Joseph P. Tumulty, secretary to President Wilson, to Miss Julia O'Connor, president of the operators' union, with a request that the statement issued by the Postmaster General be read very carefully, and giving his personal assurance that under Mr. Burleson's plan grievances would be considered immediately and a decision reached without delay. He suggested that under these circumstances it would be fair if Miss O'Connor would advise all the striking operators to return to work at once, and voices the belief that the Postmaster-General offers a plan of adjustment which is practical and just in every way. "One that your committee in fairness should accept."

The strike assumed a new phase to-day with the entry into the fight of several thousands of men, members of unions affiliated with the telephone operators in the general organization of electrical workers. The strikers' com-

mittees claimed to-day that the greater number of 12,000 cable splicers, test-room men and other associates had joined them, and that they had received many offers of aid from other unions. The Cooke and Watrous Union, it was reported, had pledged its members not to wait on strike breakers, and also had pledged its treasury of \$25,000 to the support of the strikers. Similar action has been taken in other cities of New England by various unions. In Worcester 152 electrical workers joined the strike.

Several appeals have been cabled to President Wilson to take a hand in the settlement of the strike. One of them was sent to-day by Francis J. Finerman, president of the Democratic Club of Massachusetts, and eleven members of the Legislature. It said:

"Burleson wrecking the party. Remove him and settle this strike. The first violence in connection with the strike occurred to-night when a number of students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who had worked during the day at the main exchange of the telephone company were roughly handled by strike sympathizers. The committee of the telephone operators complained that students at several educational institutions in the metropolitan district had reported that they had been urged to act as strike breakers."

Mayor Andrew U. Peters left to-night for Washington, where he will try to obtain an interview with Postmaster-General Burleson concerning the strike. Before leaving he held a conference with leaders of the operators and strikers who are on strike and received a statement of their demands. He announced that he would present this to Mr. Burleson.

Special Despatch to THE SUN.

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Postmaster-General Burleson, admitting the striking telephone employees of New England have not applied for a readjustment of the wage scale, announced to-day he had made the application for them to General Manager Driver of the New England companies.

"It is preposterous that the telephone service in New England should be tied up as it is and unthinkable that the great business interests of that section should be strangled by continuance of this condition," said Mr. Burleson. "The telephone operators, for reasons which are inexplicable to me, have refused to take steps to put the machinery in motion through which this situation may be relieved. The general manager of the New England companies, Mr. Driver, cannot act without something in the way of an application for the adjustment of the wage scale before him. Thus matters are brought to a deadlock."

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MAYOR AS PACIFIER IN HARBOR STRIKE

Boat Owners Deny They In-
vited Him, but He Pre-
sides at Meeting.

BOATMEN OFFER TERMS

Delahunty Insists on Eight
Hour Demand and No
Progress Is Made.

The labor complications that have caused two big port strikes already this year and threaten another general tieup of the harbor equipment to-morrow took an unexpected turn yesterday. The general port strike that has been called for Saturday morning at 6 o'clock was ordered by the Marine Workers Association because it and the Railroad Administration differ as to interpretation of an agreement entered into early in March.

Labor leaders yesterday, with James L. Hughes, Federal Conciliator, as a vehicle, attempted to divert the fight into other channels, and instead of negotiating with Regional Director A. H. Smith for a settlement, succeeded once more in placing their case at the door of the private boat owners, who employ 30 per cent. of the thousands of boat workers in New York Harbor. If a satisfactory agreement were reached with these employers, the dispute with the government automatically would be settled.

Mayor Hylan sat in at the conference yesterday as a pacifier and to-day the boat owners will meet to consider the offer of the labor leaders, but seem certain to reject it. Nothing that happened yesterday is expected to interfere in the slightest way with the strike that is set for Saturday.

The conference to which the boat owners were invited yesterday afternoon in the Army and Navy Building came about under strange circumstances. Mr. Hughes was understood by the boat owners as saying that William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor, would come to New York and discuss the port situation with them. He said nothing about a general conference with the strike leaders.

When Joseph H. Moran, president of the New York Tow Boat Exchange; Joseph J. Glatzmayer, president of the New York Boat Owners' Association, and J. M. Loefer, president of the New York Lighterage Association, with their counsel, Paul Bonynge, reached the Army Transport Office they found Mayor Hylan in place of Secretary Wilson.

The Mayor assured them that he was present "because Mr. Hughes had stated that the boat owners requested him to mediate. Joseph H. Moran emphatically declared that the boat owners had made no such request, that the meeting surely was the result of a misconception all around. Thomas L. Delahunty, William A. Maher, Paul Vaccarella and the other labor leaders, with whom the boat owners had expressly said they would not confer, were in the room, and with them Major-General Shanks, Col. H. J. Kerrick, William R. Bettison, representing the War Department; F. I. Howe, representing the navy, and representatives of the Railroad Administration.

The Mayor presided, and the labor men immediately declared that no settlement would be acceptable other than one made upon the port situation. Mr. Bonynge said the eight hour day was out of the question, and Mayor Hylan suggested a nine hour day. The boat owners would have nothing to do with this proposition either. In the argument Mr. Hylan apparently misunderstood what one of the boat owners said about the eight hour question, and suddenly found an indignant index finger shaking in his face, while the position of the boat owners was clarified in the mind of the Mayor.

Mayor Hylan called for a drink. A colonel, a navy captain, two lieutenants, three strikers and another conferee tried to outdistance each other down the corridor to get him a cup of water.

After three hours of wrangling the labor leaders drew up this proposition and submitted it to the boat owners:

"The labor men offered to the private boat owners and agreed for the men to go back to work immediately at the old rate of pay and working conditions, the Mayor to designate the house constituting a day's work that the men are to work until the question is finally decided by the committee."

"A committee of nine is to be appointed, four selected by each side, and this committee to select the ninth man to determine the permanent daily hours of labor and the increase in wages. If the eight members of this committee fail to agree upon or select the ninth man they consent and agree to leave the selection of the ninth man to the Mayor, and the decision of the committee will be final and binding upon both sides. This decision is to be determined within thirty days and be final and binding upon both sides."

"All men now on strike are to be returned to their former positions without

prejudice. The old scale of wages, meaning the scale in effect with the private boat owners previous to the strike of March 4, 1919. Hours and wages of the final decision to be retroactive from the time the men return to work."

Boat owners say they will under no circumstances accept the clause of the labor offer that "all men on strike are to be returned to their former positions." There are 100 boats privately owned operating in New York harbor. These boats are manned by men who were hired when the crews struck more than a month ago. The boat owners will not replace these employees with the strikers. It is consequently highly improbable that the proposition submitted by the labor leaders will be accepted by the boat owners when they meet this morning, and a report of this position will be sent to the Mayor this afternoon.

When Mr. Delahunty walked out of the meeting he said the eight hour question was paramount. He said:

"Labor is once more solidly behind an effort to bring this dispute to an amicable adjustment. We are making these temporary concessions to get a settlement. The labor men are determined to reach a settlement. By lawyers Mr. Delahunty meant Paul A. Bonynge, counsel for the boat owners, who is spokesman for the employers of 30 per cent. of the harbor workers."

Mayor Hylan will meet the labor leaders in his office at 1:30 o'clock this afternoon. He will have for them a report of the boat owners on their vote on the offer of the workers.

With the publication yesterday of a letter from Acting Secretary of War Crowell on the port situation it became known that the Merchants Association of New York had written to the Government censuring the War and Navy Departments, the Shipping Board and the Railroad Administration for the dangerous precedent that had been established in the settlement of the Government's part in the harbor strike last March.

Mr. Crowell wrote William F. Morgan, president of the Merchants Association, that the strike last March was caused because the workers had been led to understand that the men on the railroad boats would get the eight hour day, and this naturally led to similar demands upon the private owners. The Railroad Administration, it appears, had promised the men the eight hour day some time before the strike was actually declared, and when the Macy award of the National War Labor Board was rejected by the workers, the Railroad Administration kept its promise and permitted the men to return to work under the eight hour schedule. The War Department agreed to the terms, Mr. Crowell wrote, upon the recommendation of the Department of Labor, which also made similar recommendations to the Navy Department.

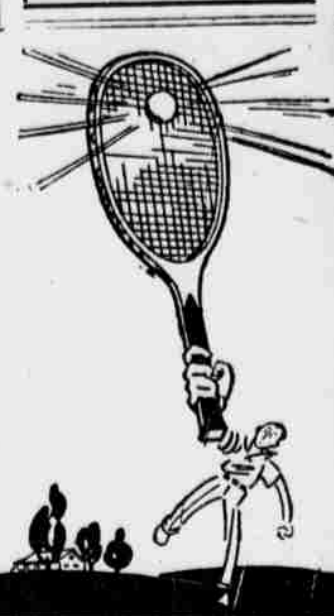
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